



## Annual Report 2017

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# Howard County Health Department Annual Report 2017

## A Message from the Health Officer

The Howard County Health Department met with several challenges over the last year including the Zika epidemic, the Ellicott City Flood and the opioid crisis. Each tested our ability to respond in emergencies. From the canvassing of neighborhoods to provide mosquito abatement advice to residents, to an environmental response to assure safe business and home clean-up in Ellicott City, to our prevention, treatment and recovery efforts in an ongoing opioid crisis, we constantly prepare to address the health and safety needs of those we serve in Howard County, in whatever situation arises.

The Health Department is known for innovative programs and approaches to addressing public health issues. We will be channeling some of our organizational energy as we take an exciting leap forward to formally launch our pursuit of national accreditation with the Public Health Accreditation Board.

Pursuing accreditation speaks to many of our core values, but one in particular is INTEGRITY and specifically how we honor the public's trust and pledge to maintain the highest standard of service.

There are numerous benefits to accreditation: it helps better identify strengths and weaknesses of the department to focus our improvement efforts; stimulates transparency; improves management processes; improves accountability to our many stakeholders and improves access to funding sources.

We look forward to embarking upon this journey.

Maura J. Rossman, MD



**Maura J. Rossman, MD**  
Health Officer

### Board of Health

The Board of Health is comprised of Howard County residents with expertise in various areas concerning health. The Board meets ten times per year and has general responsibility for the health and sanitary interests of the people of the County, working in accord with the County Council to ensure the health and safety of those in Howard County.

#### Members

Carlessia Hussein, DrPH, RN – Chair

Darryl Burnett, MPH, CHES

Kevin Carlson, MD

Sheri Lewis, MPH

Paul Nagy, PhD

Deborah R. Rivkin

Robert W. Sheesley

Sue Song, PhD

Gary A. Stewart

## VISION

A model community in which health equity and optimal wellness are accessible for all who live, work, and visit Howard County.

## MISSION

To promote, preserve, and protect the health of all in Howard County.

## VALUES

### LEADERSHIP

We advocate for and implement effective public health practices.  
We are a trusted source of health care and information.

### HEALTH EQUITY

We address the social determinants of health to achieve the highest quality of life for all.

### INNOVATION & EXCELLENCE

We foster innovation and seek excellence in every endeavor.

### COLLABORATION

We build and maintain partnerships to achieve common goals.

### CULTURE OF RESPECT & CARING

We value and respect our staff and all those we serve.

### ADVOCACY

We inform, educate, and empower to initiate change.

### PROFESSIONALISM

We foster mutual respect, transparency, and accountability.

### INTEGRITY

We honor the public's trust and pledge to maintain the highest standard of service.

*The services and facilities of the Howard County Health Department are operated on a non-discriminatory basis. This policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, creed, color, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity.*





## Community Outreach and Health Promotion

The Bureau of Health Promotion implements wellness initiatives that reduce health risk factors, improve wellness and safety, and maintain a productive and active Howard County community and workforce. In FY17, the Health Department partnered with over 84 agencies to educate over 4,100 community residents through our community outreach at partner events or community gatherings.

On April 1, 2017, the Health Department shared their programs and services offerings with the community by holding its second annual Health Expo at the Mall in Columbia to celebrate National Public Health Week. Interactive informational displays, onsite vaccinations and screenings, and a variety of community education materials were provided to participants by the HCHD bureaus, Howard County General Hospital, and community partners. The event was attended by hundreds of Howard County residents, visitors, and shoppers.

### CAREAPP

The Health Department's new initiative, **CAREAPP** (Community Access to Resources through Enhanced technology Applications for Providers and Public), is working to improve community service navigation by assisting clients with accessing social support services and resources. CAREAPP is a web-based tool that includes: a live, searchable Howard County resource directory, a risk assessment screening tool, a bi-directional tracking system, and data analytics.

In FY 17, the CAREAPP project recruited 27 key community organizations from the private, public, government, and academic sectors. Over 700 CAREAPP community providers were trained to use the tool; the project evaluation by implementation science and social network analysis will be concluded in March 2018.

### Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC)

In Fiscal Year 2017, the LHIC transitioned leadership to the Health Department and recruited four new staff members. The team increased membership to 234 individuals, representing 88 local/regional businesses in Howard County, by June 2017. A 2018-2020 Strategic Action Plan was developed with four priority areas: Access to Care, Behavioral Health, Healthy Aging and Healthy Weight.

### Tobacco Enforcement

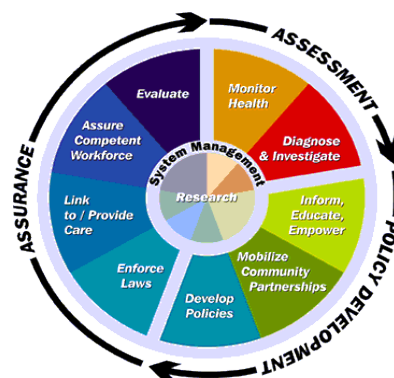
The HCHD provides Tobacco Enforcement for Howard County. Compliance visits and education visits are conducted with 250+ licensed tobacco retailers to ensure that they are compliant with Maryland Laws that prohibit tobacco sales to minors. In FY17, Enforcement Officers conducted 251 tobacco sales compliance visits, citing 24.4% of those retailers with violations for selling tobacco products to minors.

## National Accreditation

The Howard County Health Department is seeking national accreditation with the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). In June 2017, our application was submitted, approved and accepted. The Department's Accreditation team along with many dedicated staff are diligently working to compile documentation and examples that demonstrate the proficiency and quality of its programs and services delivered to the residents of Howard County.



Howard County LHIC  
Local Health Improvement Coalition



## Child Health Services

### *Injury Prevention*

The Child Health Bureau promotes injury prevention activities to educate the public and to prevent fetal/infant/child deaths in Howard County. A primary goal of programming is to support families in gaining access to resources, provide timely and accurate health and safety information, and promote health and safety for all

Howard County families. In FY17 there were 69 referrals to the Car Seat Assistance Program and 39 seats were distributed. There were 51 referrals to the Cribs for Kids Program and 39 cribs distributed. Safe sleep education is performed across the County, including quarterly sessions to new mothers at the Wellness Center. Other injury prevention activities include partnerships with local schools and community groups for the Walk & Bike to School initiative held in May and the annual Sun Safety Campaign.



### *School Based Wellness Centers*

Keeping children healthy and in school, learning is important to their futures. Eight School Based Wellness Centers are operated by the Bureau, providing health services to children while they are in school in order minimize their time away from educational activities. The eight schools participating in the program are: Bollman Bridge Elementary, Bryant Woods Elementary, Ducketts Lane Elementary, Patuxent Valley Middle, Phelps Luck Elementary, Running Brook Elementary, Stevens Forest Elementary and Talbott Springs Elementary.

### *Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program*

The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program is a free program for income eligible pregnant and postpartum women and children from birth to age five that provides access to nutritious foods, breastfeeding support and referrals to other health care, and support services. Enrollment in the HCHD WIC program as of June 2017 exceeded 4,000 participants. eWIC became active in Howard County in May, meaning: WIC will no longer issue paper checks; WIC participants receive an eWIC card that will be used as a debit card to stores that accept eWIC; Benefits are grouped together by family and subtracted from the family account as they are used.



### *Child Health Workshops*

In March, the bureau hosted two workshops addressing child and adolescent mental health. The first, held on March 22<sup>nd</sup> brought together providers to network and learn about managing anxiety in children. The second, held on March 30<sup>th</sup>, welcomed parents to learn about supporting their child's emotional and mental health.

### *Teen Health Matters*



TeenHealthMatters.org connects teens, their friends, parents, and mentors to resources that support making safe and healthy lifestyle choices. In 2017, Teen Health Matters launched a Podcast series focusing on a variety of issues relevant to teenagers.

### *Family OPTIONS*

The Family OPTIONS program provides parenting groups, linkages to resources, home visits and case management services to high risk pregnant and parenting teens age 19 and under in Howard County.

In FY17 there were 35 teens and 32 infants served by the program, with over 40 educational group sessions offered.

## Behavioral Health

The Bureau of Behavioral Health transitioned December 31, 2016 from operating a substance use disorder (SUD) outpatient clinic to being the Local Addiction Authority (LAA). The role of a LAA includes planning, developing and managing a full range of prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery services for persons who have or are at risk of developing SUD.

In the new LAA role, the Bureau worked to recruit outpatient behavioral health providers to expand the system of care. In response to the opioid epidemic, the number of outpatient SUD providers doubled in FY17 compared to FY16. A Peer Recovery Overdose Response Program launched in FY17 with 144 individuals/families referred for services in the first year of the program. The array of service expansion increased access to care in the following areas: SUD and co-occurring (mental health and SUD) outpatient and intensive outpatient services for adults and adolescent; services billable to uninsured funds, Medicaid, and private insurance; psychiatric care, and medication assisted treatment (MAT) such as Vivitrol and buprenorphine.

The Overdose Response Program (ORP) has been working hard locally to combat the opioid epidemic. The program tripled the performance measures in FY17 compared to FY16 by training 715 people how to save a life from an opioid overdose through administration of naloxone.



## Environmental Health

The Bureau of Environmental Health protects county residents by identifying environmental hazards and developing methods to reduce or eliminate those hazards. The bureau inspects food service facilities, well and septic systems, and public swimming pools and spas in the county.

The goal of the Food Protection Program is to reduce foodborne illnesses in the county by inspecting and licensing food service facilities to ensure safe food handling practices are followed.

The Community Hygiene Program licenses and inspects public and semi-public pools and spas in Howard County, monitoring water quality and the safety of each facility. The program is also responsible for the investigation of animal bites, nuisance complaints involving excess trash, pest infestations, noise pollution, sewage overflows, hazardous waste, and general unsanitary conditions.

The Well and Septic Program plays a key and prominent role to develop residential and commercial properties not served by public water and sewer.

During FY 17 the Bureau increased efforts to evaluate the impact of road salt on the ground water of individual wells.



Health Inspectors collected over 330 samples from properties around the county served by individual well water supplies. The trends revealed a number of properties with elevated levels of sodium, chloride and/or total dissolved solids (TDS).

The Health Department is working with members of the Patuxent Watershed Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to develop strategies to address the issue.

## Clinical Services

The Bureau of Clinical Services is responsible for monitoring infectious diseases such as Meningitis, Tuberculosis (TB), Lyme, etc.; responding to disease outbreaks; assuring case

management and treatment of certain diseases; and providing health evaluations for refugees. The clinic provides reproductive health services, confidential evaluation and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV counseling and testing.

In FY 2017 the Bureau of Clinical Services: treated 7 cases of active Tuberculosis; screened 80 new refugees for communicable diseases; performed 1,123 HIV tests, yielding 5 new cases who were linked to care; encountered 1,557 visits to the Reproductive Health Clinic and completed 145 Sexual Health Clinic visits at Howard Community College.





## Community Health

The Bureau of Community Health provides cancer education and screening services for the prevention of breast, cervical, and colon cancer to income eligible residents who are under or uninsured. The program also offers patient navigation through a care coordinator who can facilitate access to care for those fully or partially insured individuals who require assistance.

The Bureau offers no-cost Tobacco Cessation classes taught by trained Tobacco Treatment Specialists and provide nicotine replacement therapy to those who live, work and go to school in the County. During the 2016-2017 School Year the Tobacco Control program partnered with the schools, both private and public, to provide information and education about e-cigarettes. Through this initiative, more than 8,800 Howard County students received information about this topic in an effort to provide tobacco use prevention.

In FY17, the Adult Evaluation and Review Services (AERS) Program, provided over 960 in-home evaluations to the elderly and the disabled Howard County residents in order to determine and recommend services and programs that can foster independence in the home and avoid institutionalization.



## Emergency Preparedness and Response



The Emergency Preparedness and Response Program, housed within the Bureau of Community Health, was deployed 3 times in FY17 for confirmed Zika cases, requiring mitigation activities in the community. The group met the mitigation requirements and goals through door-to-door outreach and yard inspections with the help of multiple dedicated health department staff members. Outreach and education about Zika virus and mosquito bite prevention to the community continued through the delivery of Zika Prevention Kits to area OB/GYNs and day care centers, distribution of educational materials at multiple outreach events, and through several community presentations in both English and Spanish to church groups, representatives from other county agencies, and student groups.

## Access to Care

Medical Assistance Transportation Program has joined the Bureau of Access to Healthcare. The Medical Assistance Transportation Program developed a referral system to assist clients that have lost Medicaid eligibility and those who are in need of locating primary care or specialty care within the county.

The program will utilize the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) program and Administrative Care Coordination Unit (ACCU) staff to provide effective coordination of care.

In addition to Healthchoice enrollment, ACCU staff will be used to identify and address possible social or economic barriers for those who are frequent "No Show" riders.



## FY17 HealthStat at a Glance

### Environmental Health

Mandated Inspections	2,532
Foodborne Illness Investigations	229
Rabies Cases Investigated	671
Pool Inspections	661
Building Permit Reviews	857

### Access to Care

Medicaid Applications Processed	12,325
MA Transports Provided	49,019

### Child Health Services

Avg # of WIC Clients	4,003
% of Breastfed Babies in WIC	49.5
Immunizations Provided (adults and children)	1,342
Youth Vision Screenings	12,729
SBWC Enrollment	2,356
% Return to Class after SBWC Visit	98
Flu Vaccines Provided	2,062

### Behavioral Health

Behavioral Health Clients Seen	828
Behavioral Health Assessments Provided	703
People Trained in Overdose Response	715
Overdose Response Trainings	46

### Clinical Services

# of Disease Investigations	1,146
# of Individuals Served in Reproductive Health Clinics	1,557
HIV Screenings	1,123

### Community Health

AERS Evaluations Completed	967
Breast, Cervical and Colon Cancer Screenings	490
Enrolled in Smoking Cessation Classes	309

### Emergency Preparedness & Response

# of Medical Reserve Corps Volunteers	356
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## New Programs for FY18

### ***Inmate Outreach Initiative***

In September 2017, HCHD began sending three Medical Care Program Inmate Outreach Associates into the Howard County Detention Center to determine eligibility for health care services through the Maryland Health Benefits Exchange. For those transitioning into and out of the criminal justice system, the Affordable Care Act expansion of Medicaid Services provides new opportunities to increase health coverage for this in need population. The incarcerated population often has significant physical and mental health needs that this program can help to address.

### ***First County Residential Detox Center***

The Howard County FY2018 budget allotted \$250,000 to help fund a capital project to choose a location and begin the design process for the county's first residential detoxification center. A team including officials from HCHD and the county executive's office are working rapidly to find an appropriate location to serve the still-growing number of individuals in Howard County struggling with substance use. The goal is to choose a location for the center within the next year. This center will offer inpatient detoxification to residents and fill a gap that currently exists in the services offered in the county.

### ***Mental Health Authority Integration with the Health Department***

In early 2017, a 15 person Behavioral Health Integration Workgroup concluded the HCMHA should merge with the HCHD. This will form a Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA). The role of the newly created LBHA will be to plan, develop and manage a full range of prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery services in Howard County for those who have, or are at risk of developing, mental health and/or substance use disorders. They will also collaborate with other human service agencies to promote comprehensive, integrative care.